

Mr. Lauer. Mrs. Bush, President Bush, thanks so much for your time this morning.

President Bush. Thanks, Matt, appreciate it.

The First Lady. Thanks, Matt.

Mr. Lauer. Grab your hammers, and go back to work. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The interview was taped at 6:07 a.m. at the Habitat for Humanity site for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; and Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois.

Remarks to Reporters in Pass Christian, Mississippi

October 11, 2005

Listen, first I want to thank the superintendent for inviting us here. The schools of Pass Christian are blue ribbon schools. And they have been blue ribbon schools before, and they'll be blue ribbon schools in the future. Part of the health of a community is to have a school system that's vibrant and alive. And in spite of the fact that a lot of equipment was damaged and homes destroyed and teachers without places to live and—this school district is strong, and it's coming back. And it's a sign that out of the rubble here on the gulf coast of Mississippi is a rebuilding, is a spirit of rebuilding.

And thank you all for having us. I want to thank the principals and teachers for understanding the quality of education—the quality of the education in a community helps define the nature of the community. And one of the things that's interesting is the high school principal told Laura and me that the—and Madam Secretary—that the high school was deemed to be a blue ribbon high school after Katrina hit. And yet a lot of the students don't know that yet. And so when the high school comes back next Monday, the first thing the principal is going to tell them is that the school that they go to, even though the building is different—the buildings are different—is a blue ribbon high school.

And the superintendent says, blue ribbon high school last year, this year, and next year.

And I appreciate your spirit. Thanks for letting us come by.

Thank you all. Bye-bye. Good to meet you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:54 a.m. at DeLisle Elementary School. In his remarks, he referred to Sue Matheson, superintendent, Pass Christian School District; Cathy Broadway, principal, Pass Christian High School; and Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings.

Remarks at the Joint Reserve Base at the U.S. Naval Air Station in New Orleans, Louisiana

October 11, 2005

Generals, thanks—General Landreneau and General Downer, thank you all for greeting me here. I'm proud to be traveling with Members of the United States Congress who are with us today. Listen, I'm here to thank you all for what has been an incredible outpouring of talent and skill and compassion to help the good folks of this part of the world that have suffered mightily. I'm incredibly proud of those who wear our Nation's uniform, and I'm incredibly proud of the job you have done. You have brought great credit to your units, credit to your family, and credit to our Nation.

We've got a lot of work to do, and I'll be telling the people that I've had an honor to meet, opportunity to meet, that out of this rubble is going to come some good, out of the devastation is going to come new cities and new hope. And I hope you take great inspiration in being a part of the renewal of this important part of the world.

I want you to, when you talk to your families, to tell them the Commander in Chief is proud of them as—I'm equally as proud of them as I am proud of you.

May God bless you all and your work. May God bless your families, and may God continue to bless our great country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:29 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, Adjutant General for Louisiana; and Brig. Gen. Huntington B. Downer, Jr., Assistant Adjutant General for Louisiana.